Special Issue on the U-2 Inquiry

Some of the Inside Story As Disclosed Unwillingly by Herter's Slippery Testimony, See Pages 2-3

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. VIII, NO. 22 JUNE 6, 1960 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

Ike Posed (With A Hatchet He Never Used) to Look Like George Washington

Hagerty Preferred A Fake Truth to An All-Too-True Lie

The key to the U-2 affair lies in a paradox. Ordinarily, so grave a mishap would have been handled by a diplomatic lie. The diplomatic lie would have been that the head of the government knew nothing about it. The diplomatic lie was not used in this case because it would have been too painfully true. The record, as it unfolds in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee inquiry underway as this is written, indicates that neither Mr. Eisenhower nor Secretary of State Herter knew that a U-2 was heading over Russia May 1 only two weeks before the summit meeting. There has never been an occasion on which the diplomatic lie could have been resorted to more truthfully.

Too Embarrassingly True

Why was the diplomatic lie not used? There is a growing consensus of opinion in the press corps here that it was not used because Mr. Eisenhower's public relations man, Hagerty, was afraid this all-too-truthful diplomatic lie would be too damaging to Mr. Eisenhower. This was one diplomatic lie everybody would have believed, reinforcing the popular impression that Mr. Eisenhower is a kind of absentee tenant of the White House, spending more time on the links than on his job. The diplomatic lie would have saved face for Mr. Khrushchov in Russia and might have allowed the summit and Ike's visit to proceed as planned. International relations were sacrificed to public relations. Under Hagerty's influence, Ike decided for a falsehood that could be dressed up glamorously as a picture of a Chief Executive bravely taking responsibility for the truth, come-hell-or-high-water, just like George Washington did with the cherry tree, though in this case our hero was innocently sleeping under the tree when it fell over on him.

Mr. Khrushchov shrewdly put his finger on the point in his speech in Moscow May 28. In a passage the *New York Times* tactfully omitted from the text it published but which I found in *The Times* of London for May 30, Mr. Khrushchov said of Ike, "I am still of the opinion that he did not know. But as President he found it awkward to admit that he did not know —for what would the world and the American people think of a President who did not know what was going on in his own country?" This is the point Senator Fulbright seemed to be aiming at by indirection when he kept harping away on the question of why the President or any other head of State should take responsibility for espionage. The trouble is that this puts it wrongly. The U-2 was not ordinary espionage. The Russians could have arrested an American agent in Moscow with a suit case full of ICBM plans and it would have been regarded as clean fun by normal rules of espionage. No one would have asked or expected the President to take responsibility for it.

Herter Makes Some Admissions

"As to what led the Soviets to this extreme position, in regard to the summit meeting which had previously appeared to be so much desired by Mr. Khrushchov, we enter into the realm of pure speculation . . . in his Baku speech on April 25, he . . . began for the first time seriously to cast doubts upon the success of the summit."

—Herter's prepared statement for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee inquiry into the U-2, May 27.

Senator MANSFIELD: Were there any indications that Khrushchov planned to scuttle the conference before the U-2 plane was shot down on May 1?

Secretary HERTER: No.

Senator MANSFIELD: Did Khrushchov's Baku speech precede or follow Mr. Dillon's speech at the AFL-CIO convention?

Secretary HERTER: It followed it. . . .

Senator MANSFIELD: Have Russian experts in the executive branch suggested the possibility that Khrushchov's position at home may have become seriously undermined?

Secretary HERTER: Yes.

Senator MANSFIELD: Do you believe the U-2 may have been a contributing factor in this undermining?

Secretary HERTER: It may have been.

—Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 27

Herter Left Holding the Bag

The President took responsibility for the U-2 because it was not ordinary espionage, but a most dangerous invasion of another nation's airspace on the eve of important negotiations. To allow such a flight at such a time was a grave matter, which ordinarily would not be permitted except on fullest consideration at top levels. Mr. Eisenhower had to choose between telling the truth that he was unaware of what was going on, and had thus committed a colossal blunder, or pretending that he knew about it all the time, and claiming it was an act of high statecraft. Hagerty decided the latter would be less dangerous to Ike's reputation. What made the decision all the more striking is that with Hagerty's deft help Mr. Eisenhower has managed to dodge responsibility for activities much more normal than espionage. The question Senator Fulbright might like to ask Hagerty is how come a President who had managed

(*Continued on Page Four*)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Evasiveness Rather Than Candor Marked the Secretary of State's Replies . . .

THE CHAIRMAN (FULBRIGHT): Mr. Secretary, why do you think Chairman Khrushchov left a way out for the President by suggesting in one of his earlier statements that he believed the President did not know about these flights?

SECRETARY HERTER: I can there, of course, only speculate that he had himself committed himself very strongly in Russia with regard to his friendship for the President, and wished to in that way continue the possibility of the President disclaiming any responsibility for the flight.

THE CHAIRMAN: What was the reason for not accepting this way out on our part? Why didn't we accept that suggestion?

SECRETARY HERTER: Mr. Chairman, that was a question, as you know of judgment. . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: Was it not after the President said that he did know and took full responsibility for these flights that Chairman Khrushchov became completely intransigeant and wrecked the conference?

SECRETARY HERTER: That is very difficult to determine. . . .

Did Nuclear Arms for Germany Play A Part?

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Mr. Secretary, on page four of your statement you indicate under the title "Summit Prospects Dimmed", a series of developments that you believe indicated a change in the position or a possibility of a change in the position of the Soviet representatives, particularly Mr. Khrushchov about the summit. In the third paragraph you say "but clouds began to gather even then", referring to some developments in the Soviet Union. If you will recall that period, isn't this about the same time that the United States was considering offering nuclear weapons again to West Germany?

SECRETARY HERTER: I can't recall that we have ever done that. . . . Under the law we cannot do that.

SENATOR HUMPHREY: I understand that. There has been considerable discussion here in the U. S. of changing the law and offering weapons to our NATO allies.

SECRETARY HERTER: There may have been discussions on that subject, Senator, but we have never made any specific proposals on that point. . . .

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Is there not a great fear in the Soviet Union of the possibility of the spread of nuclear weapons to Western Germany?

SECRETARY HERTER: I think that is true. I am not sure it is confined to Western Germany. I think that it applies to the spread of nuclear weapons in other nations and it might well include Communist China.

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Yes, indeed. . . .

The Source of These Excerpts

The excerpts here given from the questioning of Secretary of State Herter May 27 by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in its investigation of the U-2 incident and the breakdown of the summit talks are based on the censored text as released to the press and not on the three pages of selections published by the New York Times May 28. There is much here that did not appear in the Times, though until the committee has published the complete text, the Times version is the fullest available.

If We Saw A Russian Plane Overhead

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Mr. Secretary, what do you think would happen in the United States if on our radar screen we should discover a plane flying at high altitude in this age of the fear of surprise attack, over our territory.

SECRETARY HERTER: I think we would do everything we could to identify it right away.

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Just identify it?

SECRETARY HERTER: Yes, identify it. . . .

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Have we ever shot down any Soviet planes over American territory or over any friendly territory in which we have bases or alliances?

SECRETARY HERTER: Not that I am aware of. . . .

Russian Fears of Attack

SENATOR MORSE: Mr. Secretary, do you think the public knowledge now of these American spy plane flights over Russia has played into the hands of Communist propaganda with the Russian people themselves by increasing the fear, no matter how unfounded we know it is, the fear of the Russian people that our real objective is to make war against Russia?

SECRETARY HERTER: I think that the Russian government will do its best to work along that line. . . .

Influence of Harder Peking Line

SENATOR MORSE: To what extent, if any, do you think Red China has put pressure on the Russian leaders to follow this adamant course of action?

SECRETARY HERTER: That again, sir, is a matter of speculation.

SENATOR MORSE: You have no evidence?

SECRETARY HERTER: But the articles which have appeared in the [Chinese] Red Star magazine, which is their official publication, have been of such a highly critical nature of the

Herter Reluctant to Admit That Khrushchov Has Seemed Sincerely for Peace

The CHAIRMAN (Fulbright): [In your prepared statement] you say as follows:

"Proponents within the Communist bloc of an aggressive course must not be encouraged by signs of weakness on our part. Proponents of a peaceful course should be encouraged by our readiness to get on with outstanding international business in a sober and rational manner."

In which of these do you include Mr. Khrushchov?

Secretary HERTER: That I think would be very difficult to answer categorically . . . [Whole page deleted by censor]. . . . I think that events are likely to show which of these groups he belongs to.

The CHAIRMAN: Who did you have in mind when you wrote that? Maybe you can't categorically for all time designate him, but what has been your view and the view of the Department as to which group he belongs to. I think that is rather important as to how we treat him. Is it in our interest to discourage him? If he was a member of the aggressive course, I suppose it would be. If he is a member of those who are proponents of the peaceful course, then it would be to our advantage to encourage or be cooperative within limits. I wondered why you put that in there if you didn't have some idea of who does belong to these groups or how they are constituted.

Secretary HERTER: What I was trying to describe here was in effect a middle course. Insofar as Mr. Khrushchov is concerned, I think those who have dealt with him directly are convinced that he is genuinely in favor of a disarmament program, that he genuinely wants for the sake of developing the economy of Russia, a reduction both in expense from a monetary point of view and from a human point of view, of the great burden of armaments. Certainly there I would put him in the second category. His more recent behaviour, however, has shaken my belief that this is entirely genuine, and, as I say, I think that only the events of the next few years can give a final answer to what you have asked."

—Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 27

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

. . . Principal Attempt at Falsification: The "Decision Not to Suspend" Flights

whole policy of so-called peaceful co-existence, the whole detente policy, that Mr. Khrushchov seemed to have been following, that they may well have had a considerable influence.

Long's Embarrassing Question

SENATOR LONG: When we plead guilty to espionage in this case, how can we plead guilty on the one hand and contend that there is no punishment in order, when we plead guilty to violating international law?

SECRETARY HERTER: We have said that we pleaded guilty to it entirely on the ground that for ourselves and for the free world it was essential for us to get information with regard to dangers of surprise attack or aggression.

SENATOR LONG: The thought that occurs to me is that, and I am not sure that we are in position to be completely self-righteous about passing judgment on ourselves in our own case. . . . I don't very well see how we are going to plead guilty in the matter and then take the attitude that no apology is forthcoming. . . .

Future Flights of U-2?

SENATOR CARLSON: Will that [the breakdown of the summit] influence our course of action in getting information that is essential for our security?

SECRETARY HERTER: I think we will do whatever we feel is essential for our security. I am not saying in that respect that we are going to deliberately utilize the U-2 again. I have never said that. . . .

That Decision Nobody Ever Made

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Secretary [you say in your prepared statement] "The decision not to suspend this program of flights, as the summit meeting approached, was a sound decision." Can you tell us who made that decision and when and of the circumstances?

SECRETARY HERTER: That is a decision that I think has been a decision that has carried over the whole 4-year period.

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't think I make myself clear . . . this statement seems to leave the implication that a specific decision was taken not to suspend them in view of the conference approaching. Was such a decision taken?

SECRETARY HERTER: That I can't tell you. I was not a party to it. . . . May I read what the President said on that subject? He said, "As to the timing, the question was really whether to halt the program and thus forego the gathering of important information that was essential and that was likely to be unavailable at a later date. The program went forward." [Actually, though this last sentence was in the prepared advance text, in the speech as the President delivered it, he substituted the sentence "The decision was that the program should not be halted". The original sentence was truthful, for it implied that the program continued without decision. The substituted sentence seems to have been untruthful, in implying a definite decision—IFS.]

[*Whole page deleted by censor.*]

THE CHAIRMAN: Then that decision was made by the President?

SECRETARY HERTER: Oh, he was certainly consulted with regard to the continuation of the program. . . .

SENATOR GORE: Did you participate in a conference or were you aware of a decision? Did you make a decision? What is the full extent of your knowledge of a decision that the flights would not be discontinued?

SECRETARY HERTER: I know of no conference at which the matter was discussed. . . .

Flippant Finale

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Secretary, one last thing. Do you think we have learned, not just we but all of us, including you and the Administration, anything from the U-2 incident?

SECRETARY HERTER: Not to have accidents.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is that all we have learned?

SENATOR GORE: Not what?

MR. MACOMBER [State Dept.]: Not to have accidents.

Abusing Security Censorship

The U-2 hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee are made public only in censored form. Such censorship is supposed to be for security reasons only but is often abused to withhold embarrassing information. We give a rather transparent example from the first day's hearing May 27:

Secretary HERTER: All espionage is a violation of sovereignty, all forms of espionage.

Senator LONG: [Question deleted by censor].

Secretary HERTER: [One word deleted]. However, the Chicago convention which is the principal convention dealing with this, has never been accepted by the Russians nor have they accepted any bilateral agreement with regard to air space over their country.

Senator LONG: [Question deleted].

Secretary HERTER: Yes.

The Chicago civil aviation convention negotiated in the 40's made it a violation of international law to invade another nation's air space without permission. The U. S. ratified but the Russians didn't. It is obvious that Senator Long was asking whether aerial reconnaissance was not a violation of this treaty to which we are a party. The questions and answers bear no relation to any kind of security, except security from public criticism. We hope some member of the committee, who attended the hearings, will study the deletions when the hearings are over and report on any abuses of censorship—IFS.

Herter Disingenuous on The Key Question in the Breakdown of the Summit

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Secretary, what were the considerations which led to the decision, not only to assume responsibility for the flight, but to imply that the flights would continue in the future?

Secretary HERTER: I have to take responsibility for the statement that was [so] interpreted . . . and it seems to me it was pretty far-fetched interpretation.

The CHAIRMAN: Then do you mean . . . that you did not intend to convey the view or the possibility that the flights would be continued? Is that correct?

Secretary HERTER: No, what I was saying there is just what I have testified to today; that from the point of view of our own interests and that of the whole free world, it is essential for us to do whatever we properly can in order to acquire information to avoid surprise attack or to be prepared for it.

The CHAIRMAN: But in view of that statement, do you think that Mr. Khrushchov could accept it and continue the conference?

Secretary HERTER: Yes, I certainly do if he had wanted to.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you think our President would accept such a statement from any other power?

Secretary HERTER: If he wanted to go to a conference? Certainly.

—Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 27

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Secretary of State Was Second Only to the President in Unawareness

Were They Going to Continue U-2 Flights While Ike Was in Russia?

(*Continued from Page One*)

to evade responsibility for almost everything else which has gone wrong in his Administration, decided to march up and shoulder this one. Unfortunately the Senate Foreign Relations Committee can question Cabinet officers but not Presidential aides. The result was to leave Secretary Herter holding the bag for Hagerty, and the Secretary of State proved second only to the President in unawareness of what has been going on.

Flights Stopped During Suez Crisis

There is evidence that at moments when somebody was minding store, official Washington was aware that U-2 flights were in a dangerous special category. Chalmers Roberts in a special account in the *Washington Post* May 27, the day the hearings began, said U-2 flights were suspended during the Suez crisis negotiations with the Russians in September, 1956. John Foster Dulles was then Secretary of State. Somebody seems to have realized that a strange plane suddenly appearing over Russia in that tense situation might have triggered trouble. According to a *New York Times* story May 30 by Hanson Baldwin, U-2 flights were "temporarily suspended just prior to, during and after Premier Khrushchov's visit to the United States" last September but resumed "with the subsequent delay of the summit meeting and of President Eisenhower's scheduled visit to the Soviet Union." If true, on that occasion, too, somebody realized that a U-2 flight would risk upsetting negotiations. Mr. Roberts, in his account, also reported, "CIA officials contend that there was to be a cut-off of U-2 flights before the Summit", the only question being "how much time constituted a margin of safety"

Was the May 1 Flight to Be The Last?

It is hard to believe that even in this capital officials would be idiotic enough to continue the U-2 flights at the very time the President was conferring in Paris or would send them overhead when he was visiting Russia. When Senator Fulbright asked Secretary Herter "Was any moratorium agreed upon prior to May 1, to be effective at any time after May 1," the Secretary gave the curious answer "I have heard reports to that effect, but of my own knowledge I do not know." When Fulbright asked him at another point whether there had been any moratorium during the Camp David talks, Herter replied that so far as he knew there was no such moratorium. But it is evident from the record that the Secretary of State knew little and could do less. When Senator Humphrey asked whether he could not have vetoed the flights, he answered "I could only have given my advice to the President."

(*More Next Week*)

On the Public's Right to Know

"It has been the policy of each Secretary of State under whom I have been honored to serve, going back to Cordell Hull, that, not only are the American people entitled to know the facts—within the limits of essential and legitimate security requirements—but it is essential that they have an understanding of the alternatives that face this Nation . . . there is not only a right to know—there is an obligation on the part of the good citizen to seek out the facts. . . ."

—The News Division of the Dept. of State, by Lincoln White, press officer since 1939, Dept. Pub. 6859.

Senator GORE: You say now that on the 5th you received this information that the pilot was probably alive and yet, on the afternoon of the 6th, this Mr. Lincoln White, official spokesman for the department, said this: "There was absolutely no deliberate attempt to violate the Soviet Air Space and there never has been." Did you authorize that statement?

Under Secretary DILLON: No, not specifically.

—Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 27

Why Not Start A Gift Subscription With This Issue?

I. F. Stone's Weekly, 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W. Washington 15, D. C.

Please renew (or enter) my sub for the enclosed $5:*

Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

6/6/60

Enter gift sub for $2 (6 mos.) or $4 (1 yr.) additional:

(To) Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

Shall we send gift announcement? Yes ☐ No ☐

I. F. Stone's Weekly
5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W.
Washington 15, D. C.

NEWSPAPER

Entered as Second Class Mail Matter Washington, D. C. Post Office

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Entered as Second Class Matter at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Post-dated Mondays but published every Thursday except the last two Thursdays of August and December at 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W., Washington 15, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: $5 in the U. S.; $6 in Canada; $10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: $15 to Europe; $20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED